

ANSWERING ISKCON

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Why the verse 16.8 cannot be used against Advaita Vedanta Part 3

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In answering this we have already removed the objection of why the word Asatyam can take a different meaning other than unreal, we have also shown that Asatyam meant by Adi Shankaracharya in his Bhashya does not mean unreal since it refers to Charvakas, and the verse cannot be applied to Jains or Buddhists or the sophisticated materialists of today. Now let us look at the verse itself

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम्।

अपरस्परसम्भूतं किमन्यत्कामहैतुकम्॥16.8॥

Translation: They proclaim, This is not true (not related to any absolute reality), without foundation, this world has no Lord or God, it is caused mutually (mutual cause and effect of elements), what reason is there other than desire (in this case sexual passion)

Now let us take this verse असत्यम् now if we take it a unreal, and this is what is being ascribed to the world, then the job is done more qualifiers like अप्रतिष्ठम् – without basis, अनीश्वरम् – without a Lord or God, अपरस्परसंभूतम् – mutually caused and so on are not required here. Why do we require them ? Suppose a person says “the world is unreal”, the next question that will be asked is this, “on what basis you say this”. It will not be “what about God?”. No person who thinks logically will get such a question in his head, only if someone were to say “there is no ultimate cause to this world” then we would ask questions like “what about God ?” Then we will get answers like “there is no God”, then we can ask “how this world came about ?” We will get answers like “relatively caused”, so logical and reasonable conclusion is that this verse is used for gross materialism. Nothing more, it cannot be applied for Advaita since Shri Krishna makes it very clear that Advaita belongs to the Daivi Sampada. Following is what is said in the 1st verse of the 16th chapter

मूल श्लोकः

श्री भगवानुवाच

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिः ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः।

दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम्॥16.1॥

Translation: Fearlessness is the fruition of Satwa, to be established in the Yoga of knowledge or wisdom, it also consists of Charity, self control, sacrifice, self study, austerity and straight forwardness.

Shankara comments as follows

ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ज्ञानं शास्त्रतः आचार्यतश्च आत्मादिपदार्थानाम् अवगमः

Meaning: Being established in the Yoga of knowledge meaning having the knowledge and understanding of Atman and the other substances through Shastra and Acharya.

Now how do I say this, what is my basis, Bhagavat Gita is my basis. Let us look at the 13th chapter verse 3

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम॥13.3॥

Meaning: That knowledge which tells about Kshetra (known) and Kshetrajna (knower) that alone is knowledge.

This completely disproves Iskcon's claim that Bhakti is the way or knowledge is another name for Bhakti, no basis for this

We find further proof in the Bhagavad Gita itself

मूल श्लोकः

यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनुपश्यति।

तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म सम्पद्यते तदा॥13.31॥

English Translation By Swami Gambirananda

13.31 When one realizes that the state of diversity of living things is rooted in the One, and that their manifestation is also from That, then one becomes identified with Brahman.

Hence this alone is knowledge as per Shri Krishna not only that Shri Krishna calls Advaita alone as Satwika Jnanam

मूल श्लोकः

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते।

अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम्॥18.20॥

English Translation By Swami Gambirananda

18.20 Know that knowledge to be originating from sattva through which one sees a single, undecaying, undivided Entity in all the diversified things.

Proving Advaita alone to be Saatwik knowledge. As a final note, let us take for granted that Asatyam in the verse 16.8 means unreal, even then this will not in the least affect Advaita, why ? Since Adi Shankara in his commentary on the Chandogya Upanishad says the following

न असत्त्वं कस्यचित्कचिदिति ब्रूमः

Chandogya Bhashya 6.2.3

Meaning: We never tell unreality for anything anywhere.

प्रध्वंसाच्चोर्ध्वम् असत्त्वं ब्रुवते तार्किकाः, न तथा अस्माभिः कदाचित्कचिदपि सतोऽन्यदभिधानमभिधेयं वा वस्तु परिकल्प्यते ।

Chandogya Bhashya 6.2.3

Meaning: The logicians talk about prior non existence posterior non existence and so on, it is not like that by us, at any time anywhere we never talk of anything non different from existence either in means of knowing or known no substance different from existence is there.

So even if Asatyam is told, that will not apply to Advaita since Advaita states there is no non existence. Ofcourse Iskconites cannot understand Advaita, Shankara explains further

यथा वा पिण्डघटादि मृदोऽन्यबुद्ध्या पिण्डघटादिशब्देनाभिधीयते लोके । रज्जुविवेकदर्शिनां तु सर्पाभिधानबुद्धी निवर्तते, यथा च मृद्विवेकदर्शिनां घटादिशब्दबुद्धी, तद्वत् सद्विवेकदर्शिनामन्यविकारशब्दबुद्धी निवर्तते

Chandogya Bhashya 6.2.3

Translation: Just as a lump and pot when seen as different from clay are called lump and pot, just once a person recognises the rope, the idea of snake vanishes for him, just as recognising the clay the whole idea of pot etc vanishes similarly knowing existence all notions and words of change goes away.

Also Shankara says the following

सदेव सदिति अस्तितामात्रं वस्तु सूक्ष्मं निर्विशेषं सर्वगतमेकं निरञ्जनं निरवयवं विज्ञानम्, यदवगम्यते सर्ववेदान्तेभ्यः

Chandogya Bhashya 6.2.1

Meaning: Sat alone, Sat means mere existence is Sat, it is subtle without any qualities, all pervading, one, stainless, without parts, awareness which is understood so in all Upanishads.

As a final note I would like to answer the author on the following sentence

““Mithya is Achintya, & Avidya is Achintya, it is beyond logic”. Just a lame escape. I”

So this can be said the same of Achintya Bhedabheda, it is beyond logic is also a lame excuse, also Mithya is not Achintya, Mithya simply means it has no independent existence, just like how the pot has no existence apart from the clay, in fact pot is merely a mould of the clay, even when the pot is broken the clay remains, similarly all of this is an appearance of that subtle mere existence as per Advaita Vedanta. Iskconites cannot at any point proper represent Advaita and refute it they have to some how caricature it. Iskconites use a stupid and moronic logic that form has to cause form, so the pot which is form will cause another pot which is also form ? This is how ridiculous their whole argument is to begin with. This completely answers why 16.8 cannot be used against Advaita Vedanta

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ONE THOUGHT ON “WHY THE VERSE 16.8 CANNOT BE USED AGAINST ADVAITA VEDANTA PART 3”

ShivaG

july 20, 2023 at 8:17 am

Very thorough analysis and conclusion- In describing the order of manifestation (if called creation a creator is implied) when it becomes gross ‘appears or becomes manifest’ it starts from Ichchashakti and Jnaanshakti which are super subtle and reduces itself and becomes gross. About Pure Consciousness one cannot say anything except “IS” same as Sat- Iskconites are hung on form and personality and without any reasoning or logic to present resort to abusive language. “I AM” as Ramana Maharshi often said is the last word about ultimate Reality which we can EXPERIENCE. – Dhanyavad

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